



Tips for Building Partnerships to Promote the 2008 WOMAN Challenge

Below are some tips and ideas on how to build partnerships with other organizations for your event/activity promoting the WOMAN Challenge. Creating a partnership will allow you access to resources that may not be available through your organization alone. A partnership with another organization may also help you reach more people and gain greater media attention. For example, an organization that focuses on women's health may want to partner with a women's health department at a hospital. Alternately, if you offer BMI tests, think about teaming up with a local fitness center. Partners can help you publicize your event, provide an event venue, offer additional women's health resources, disseminate information and provide volunteers at your event. Here are some types of organizations you may want to consider reaching out to:

Retail stores: Retail stores are a great place to hold your event. They can also help promote your event by displaying posters, especially if they cater to the female audience. They can also include a link on their web site, and even provide free giveaway items such as pedometers or water bottles.

Local Fitness Centers: Fitness centers are focused on improving the health of their clients. They may be able to provide a local spokesperson for your event or an incentive to those who attend your event. For example, the fitness center could provide free one-day passes to one of their locations or pedometers. They could also support your event with volunteer staff or assist in promoting your event and the WOMAN Challenge to their gym members.

Local businesses: Local businesses are always looking for new ways to give back to the community and may be interested in holding events at their offices or providing staff/support to volunteer at your event. They may also have publications that can assist in promoting your event. Or, if they are interested in holding a lunch 'n' learn seminar for employees, offer to have someone from your organization be a speaker, and to bring informational women's health and WOMAN Challenge materials.

Health insurance companies: Insurance companies can assist you in hosting check-up days at various clinics or other locations that provide health screenings. They can also disseminate information to doctor offices in your area. Donations of supplies may also be an option.

Hospitals: Hospitals can be used as the location for your free health screenings and can share additional resources with your participants. They may also be able to donate materials needed to hold a free health screening, such as rubber exam gloves, needles, doctors, etc.

Associations/organizations: Associations and organizations that specifically target women can help promote the WOMAN Challenge and National Women's Health Week in their publications (i.e. newsletters, listserv, Web site, etc.).

How do I find organizations in my community to partner with?

Go online and do some research! You can also check your local newspapers for organizations that are holding events similar to the event that you want to hold. Or ask coworkers if they have contacts outside of your organization that may be interested. Attending conferences and fairs to gauge what other organizations are in your community is another idea.

How do I reach out to other organizations?

Once you have done some research and established organizations in your community that you want to team up with for a WOMAN Challenge event, it's time to reach out to them. Find contact information on the Web site or in the phone book and send a letter or e-mail explaining why they should be a part of National Women's Health Week and promoting the WOMAN Challenge. In the e-mail or letter, mention your event and why you think they would fit as a partner (refer back to the possible partner's mission statement, past activity, etc.). Following-up with a phone call is essential.

If the organization expresses interest, set-up a call or face-to-face meeting to discuss the possibilities. Provide background information about you/your organization and a fact sheet about the WOMAN Challenge to educate the potential partner. Remember, this is a mutual partnership, so both organizations should benefit from it.

Once an agreement has been made, maintain clear communication as the event approaches. Monthly, weekly, and sometimes even daily phone calls, emails, and/or meetings should be arranged to make sure all tasks are completed and everyone is on the same page. Once the event is over, make sure you thank your partner and keep the door open for future partnership opportunities.